Illinois Department of Transportation

THE SPRING 2005 ILLINOIS MOTORIST OPINION SURVEY

Conducted for

Illinois Department of Transportation

Conducted by

Survey Research Office
Center *for* State Policy & Leadership
University of Illinois at Springfield (UIS)

SUMMARY OF RESULTS
(with response rate information)

June 2005
[Results Weighted by Population Distribution of IDOT Districts]

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Introduction

The Illinois Department of Transportation contracted with the Survey Research Office, located within the Center for State Policy and Leadership, of the University of Illinois at Springfield (UIS) to conduct a mail-out Motorist Opinion Survey in the Spring of 2005. Similar surveys had been conducted for the Department in: the Spring of 2004, 2003, and 2002; the Fall of 2001; and the Spring of 2001. Staff of the UIS Survey Research Office offered advice concerning final question wording, assisted in developing the specific methodology (see below), implemented the data collection procedures (see below) and data input, and analyzed the results. A summary of the results are summarized in this report.

Methodology

The sample. For the Spring 2005 survey, a stratified sample of listed Illinois households was purchased from Survey Sampling, Inc., one of the leading vendors of samples in the country.[1] The sample was stratified by IDOT region, with 2000 households randomly selected from District 1, and 190 from each of the other eight IDOT Districts (for a total of 1,520 outside of District 1). Thus, a grand total of 3,520 randomly-selected households were in the original sample.

It should be noted that this was the same methodology that was used in all previous surveys except Spring 2002. In that survey, both a cross-sectional sample (such as this) and a panel design (following up on those who responded in the Fall 2001 survey) were used. Because the cross-sectional portion of this design was thought to better represent licensed drivers, the original cross-sectional sampling design was selected for subsequent surveys.

Data collection procedures. Each original sample member was sent an initial survey package in mid April, 2005.[2] These initial packages consisted of a personalized letter from the Secretary of IDOT, a four-page questionnaire in booklet form, and a postage-paid return envelope addressed to the UIS-SRO in an outside envelope with the IDOT logo.[3] About one week after this initial mailing, a postcard thank-you / reminder was sent to all sample members. And, about a week and one-half after the postcard, a follow-up survey package was sent to non-respondents. This follow-up survey package was similar in composition to the first survey package.

One variation used in both the Spring 2005, 2004 and 2003 surveys is *worthy of note*. In previous cross-sectional surveys, we asked that the licensed driver with the next

[1] In the initial Spring 2001 survey, the sample was purchased from Survey Sampling, Inc. rather than selected from the Secretary of State's list of licensed drivers because of time considerations. Since then, this decision has been driven by the desire to maintain consistency in this aspect of the methodology, particularly since a purpose of these surveys is to assess changes over time.

[2] The initial survey packages were mailed April 11-12, 2005; postcard reminders were mailed April 18-19; and follow-up survey packages to non-respondents were mailed April 28 – May 2, 2005.

[3] The survey packages were the same as those for all the earlier surveys, with the exception of the inclusion of focus group participation forms in the Fall 2001 survey packages.

birthday to complete the questionnaire in order to "randomly" vary the characteristics of the respondent. However, because we have difficulty in soliciting responses from the youngest licensed drivers, we *explicitly asked for the youngest licensed driver in the household* to complete the survey in a random half of the sample members in the most recent two surveys. In all cases, we did ask that another licensed driver in the household complete the survey if the requested driver was not available.

Returns and response rate. Through June 20, 2005, over 1,300 (n = 1,324 usable and unduplicated surveys had been returned to the Survey Research Office and input for analysis. This represents almost 38 percent (37.6%)of the sample, and is *an "initial" response rate that underestimates the actual response rate*. This *initial* response rate from the random "next birthday" half is 35 percent (39.3%), slightly higher than the 36 percent (36.0%) response rate for the "youngest driver" half.

We describe this as an "initial response rate" because the number of mail-out problems and the number who indicated having no licensed driver in the household have not been subtracted from the base. When these are subtracted from the base, the response rate (known as the cooperation rate) rises to 40 percent (40.1%). The cooperation rate is 41.6 percent for the "next birthday" half, and 38.8 percent for the "youngest driver" half. Relevant response and cooperation rate numbers for the total sample and by IDOT region are presented below in Table 1A.

Table 1
Cross-Sectional Sample and Response Rates,
Total and by IDOT District*

District	Original number	Mail problems	Not Licensed Driver / Deceased	Remain-ing number	Returns	"Initial" Response Rate (base: all)	Coopera-tion Rate (base: remaining)
1	2,000	77	45	1878	650	32.5%	34.6%
2	190	6	5	179	88	46.3%	49.2%
3	190	7	5	178	81	42.6%	45.5%
4	190	9	8	173	75	39.5%	43.3%
5	190	12	5	173	89	46.8%	51.4%
6	190	8	9	173	91	47.9%	52.6%
7	190	7	2	181	84	44.2%	46.4%
8	190	5	3	182	89	46.8%	48.9%
9	190	2	5	183	77	40.5%	42.1%
TOTAL	**3,520**	133	87	3,300	**1,324**	**37.6%**	**40.1%**

*The above summary represents returns through June 20, 2005.

For the results reported in the summary below, respondents in the 2005 sample have been weighted to reflect each district's overall estimated proportion of licensed drivers. The estimated proportions for each district used in this weighting, as in the past reports, are: District 1 - Schaumburg (58.6%); District 2 - Dixon (8.8%); District 3 – Ottawa (5.9%); District 4 - Peoria (4.8%); District 5 - Paris (5.7%); District 6 – Springfield

(5.3%); District 7 - Effingham (2.7%); District 8 - Collinsville (5.5%); and District 9 - Carbondale (2.8%).[4]

The sampling error for this survey is just less than +/- 3 percent, at the 95 percent confidence level. That is, the percentage results for the full sample will be within 3 percentage points of the actual population characteristics 95 percent of the time.[5]

The questionnaire

The questionnaire was a four-page booklet that consisted of continuing questions as well as questions new to this year's survey. The first part of the questionnaire consisted of continuing questions asking respondents to rate various aspects of state highways and bridges under three main headings: maintaining highways and traffic flow; road repair and construction; and traveler services. Respondents were then asked about their awareness and use of the IDOT toll-free telephone number and website. And following this, they were asked to rate IDOT employees on four characteristics and to give an overall rating of IDOT's performance.

New questions began at the bottom of page 2 and continued through the middle of page 4. The first of these questions asked respondents to assess the impact of IDOT on their area's economy and quality of life and then asked about their general trust in IDOT.

Respondents were then asked two questions relating to return on their tax dollars. They were first asked which of three aspects (overall amount of service; overall quality of work; and overall professionalism) are most important in terms of this return and were then asked to rate IDOT on the three aspects.

Traffic safety was the topic of the next two questions. In these questions, respondents were asked to evaluate the amount of activities IDOT conducts to promote traffic safety and to evaluate the messages used.

The next three sections of new questions address how people form opinions about IDOT and how IDOT communicates with the general public. In the first of these sections, respondents were asked to assess how much each of five selected possible sources of opinion have influenced their opinion of IDOT. In the second section, respondents were asked to evaluate ten selected modes of conveying information in terms of "informing people like yourself." And in the third section, respondents were asked their degree of interest in eight selected transportation-related topics. The final

[4] For the weighting, the 2000 population Census figures for Illinois counties were used. However, the proportion of licensed drivers for the Chicago metro area was decreased somewhat from the population proportion because of two factors: 1) the likelihood that this area contains a higher proportion of households with no licensed driver; and 2) the likelihood that the population in this area contains a higher proportion of household members not old enough to drive. It is acknowledged that estimation is involved here; however, it should be noted that any small changes in this weighting will have no impact on the substantive results.

[5] Note that this assumes a non-biased sampling frame and no bias in those who respond. The sampling error for the sample size of 1324 is +/- 2.7 percentage points.

new question asked respondents whether they would "sign up" to receive email messages from IDOT about transportation-related topics and issues.

The last part of the questionnaire asked continuing questions about selected demographic and driving-related characteristics of respondents.

Description of the responding sample

The following presents a description of the sample in terms of selected demographics asked about in the questionnaire and offers comparisons between the demographics obtained when asking for "the youngest licensed driver" and when asking for "the driver with the next birthday."

As with the substantive results, this description is based on results weighted by IDOT district. (See Table 2 for a summary.) It should be noted that throughout most of this report, percentages have been rounded to integers. (Rounding may result in percentages not adding exactly to 100%.)

Gender and age. For those responding sample members (98% of the total sample), well over half (56%) indicated being male while the remaining 44 percent indicated being female. The average age of respondents in the total sample is about 54 years old (mean = 53.9 years and median = 54 years). About one-third (33%) of the respondents are in the two youngest age groups, split between those 16 to 35 years of age (15%) and those 36 to 45 years of age (18%). About one in five are in each of the next two age groups: 46 to 55 (20%) and 56 to 65 (21%). About one-quarter (26%) are over the age of 65, split between those who 66 to 75 (15%) and those who are over 75 (11%).

Asking for the "youngest licensed driver" increased the number of those in the youngest age category, with 20 percent in the random "youngest driver" half being 16 to 35 years old compared to 12 percent for the "regular" ("next birthday") half. And, this is the only demographic and driving-related characteristic for which the overall differences between the two sample groups are statistically-significant.

Driving-related descriptions. *Miles drive per year.* The median number of miles respondents drive per year is 12,000 miles while the mean number is higher, somewhat more than 15,000 (15,244).[6] Compared to the "regular" sample, the "youngest driver" half has a somewhat higher percentage who have driven 12,000 to 20,000 miles per year (33% vs. 29%) and slightly lower percentages who have driven both more and less. However, the average miles driven per year is very similar between the two sample groups, and overall differences across the mileage categories are not statistically-significant.

Miles drive on job per year. Just over four in ten (42%) reported mileage for miles they drive on their job per year (not including commuting). *For these respondents*, the median number of miles they reported driving per year on their job is 5,000. Over one-quarter (28%) of these respondents reported driving 1,000 miles or less per year; and

[6] These results are based on the 90 percent of respondents who gave any miles per year.

nearly one-quarter reported driving each of the next three mileage categories: 1,001 to 5,000 miles (24%); 5,001 to 12,001 miles (24%); and more than 12,000 miles (24%). The median number of miles driven per year for their job is the same for the two sample groups, and the overall differences in mileage categories are not statistically-significant.

Commuting. When asked about the miles and minutes of commuting, about six in ten (62%) of the respondents reported information. The median number of miles these respondents reported being from work is 12 miles. The median number of minutes it takes to get to work is 22 minutes while the median number of minutes it takes to get home is slightly more, at 25 minutes – for a total median commute time of just over three-quarters of an hour (47 minutes). The associated mean numbers are always somewhat greater, reflecting the fact that there are always some respondents at the higher end that "pull" the average numbers up from the median.

Fewer respondents in the "regular" sample reported commuting information (59% vs. 65% for the "youngest" sample group). For those who did, the average distance and length of commuting time is slightly higher for the "regular" sample than for the "youngest" sample group. However, these differences in commuting distance and time are not statistically-significant.

Residential location. Almost half (48%) of the "weighted" respondents reported living in the two listed metro Chicago areas, with just over one in ten indicating they live in the City of Chicago (13%) and just over one-third (35%) indicating they live in the Chicago suburbs.[7] Proportions surrounding one-tenth reported living in five "downstate" areas: a city of more than 75,000 (7%); a city of 20,000 to 75,000 (12%); a city/town of 10,000 to 19,999 (8%); a city/town/village less than 10,000 (12%); and a rural area (10%). Less then one in twenty (3%) reported living in the Metro East area. Overall, residential location is similar for both the "youngest" and "regular" samples.

Education and income. Almost three in ten (28%) of the respondents have up to a high school diploma or GED as their highest level of education while one-third (33%) have some post high school education and nearly four in ten (39%) have a four-year college degree. Only somewhat more respondents in the "youngest" than "regular" sample group are found in the lowest education category (30% vs. 27%). The percent found in the highest education category is the same. And, overall, the differences in education categories between the two sample groups is not statistically-significant.

The median household income of respondents is in the $50,000 to $74,999 range, with the best estimate being about $56,000. About 14 percent of all responding households have incomes less than $25,000 a year, and 27 percent are in households with incomes between $25,000 and $50,000 a year. One-quarter (25%) of the respondents are in households with incomes between $50,000 and $75,000 a year, and the remaining respondents are split between those in households with incomes between $75,000 and $100,000 a year (16%) and those in households with incomes of more than $100,000 a

[7] See the description of weighting in the Methodology section. Note that 21% of those in District One reported living in the City of Chicago, 58% reported living in the Chicago suburbs, and 22% reported another type of area (but NOT Metro East).

year (18%). Overall, the difference in the income level distributions between the two sample groups is very small and not statistically-significant.

Differences between the "youngest driver" and "next birthday" sample groups. The largest differences between the two sample groups in the current survey are found with regard to age. But even here, differences between the two groups are not major. Rather, we find the "youngest" sample to have somewhat more in the 16 to 35 age group (a difference of 8 percentage points) while the "next birthday" group has slightly more in the 36 to 55 age groups (a difference of 4 percentage points). And, the median age is found to differ by only 1 year between the two sample groups (53 years vs. 54 years). Differences on all other characteristics are smaller and are not statistically-significant.

Table 2
Selected Demographic Characteristics
of Spring 2005 Sample

Characteristic	Total Sample	Random Half Asked for Youngest Driver	Random Half Asked for Next Birthday
Gender			
Male	56%	55%	57%
Female	44%	45%	43%
(based on 98%)			
Age			
16 to 35	15%	20%	12%
36 to 45	18%	16%	20%
46 to 55	20%	19%	21%
56 to 65	21%	21%	20%
66 to 75	15%	15%	15%
Over 75	11%	10%	12%
Mean	53.9 yrs	52.4 yrs	55.1 yrs
Median	54.0 yrs	53.0 yrs	54.0 yrs
(based on 96%)			
Education			
Up to HS	29%	32%	27%
Post HS	32%	31%	32%
4-yr college	39%	38%	40%
(based on 97%)			
Income			
< $25,000	14%	15%	14%
$25-49,999	27%	28%	26%
$50-74,999	25%	26%	25%
$75-100,000	16%	15%	16%
> $100,000	18%	16%	19%
(based on 85%)			

(continued on next page)

Table 2 (continued)

Characteristic	Total Sample	Random Half Asked for Youngest Driver	Random Half Asked for Next Birthday
Miles drive /yr			
Up to 6,000*	19%	19%	20%
6,000-12,000	33%	33%	34%
12-20,000	31%	33%	29%
Over 20,000	16%	15%	17%
Mean	15,244 miles	15,128 miles	15,355 miles
Median	12,000 miles	12,000 miles	12,000 miles
(based on 90%)			
Residential location			
City of Chicago	13%	12%	13%
Chicago suburbs	35%	34%	35%
Metro East	3%	3%	3%
City > 75,000	7%	6%	8%
City 20-75,000	12%	12%	11%
City/town 10-20,000	8%	8%	8%
Town < 10,000	12%	13%	11%
Rural	10%	10%	11%
(based on 96%)			
Miles drive on job / year			
% giving number	42%	42%	41%
Of these:			
1 to 100	*8%*	*7%*	*8%*
101 to 1000	*20%*	*19%*	*22%*
1001 to 5000	*24%*	*24%*	*23%*
5001 to 12,000	*24%*	*26%*	*23%*
Over 12,000	*24%*	*23%*	*24%*
Median	*5,000*	*5,000*	*5,000*
Commuting			
% giving answer	62%	65%	59%
Of these:			
avg miles one way to work	*Mean = 17.0 Median = 12.0*	*Mean = 16.2 Median = 12.0*	*Mean = 17.8 Median = 13.0*
avg minutes to work	*Mean = 28.1 Median = 22.0*	*Mean = 26.9 Median = 20.0*	*Mean = 29.3 Median = 25.0*
avg minutes home from work	*Mean = 30.8 Median = 25.0*	*Mean = 30.0 Median = 25.0*	*Mean = 31.6 Median = 30.0*

*Among those who indicated any driving miles. About one-tenth either did not answer the question or gave "0" miles.

Differences between the 2005 sample and previous samples. A comparison of the demographic portraits of the Spring 2005 and Spring 2004 surveys finds only small differences. The Spring 2005 sample is just slightly older, has slightly fewer with high school (or less) as their highest level of education, and has somewhat fewer in the lowest two income categories. However, these differences are minor.

In earlier reports, we commented on the similarity of the 2004 demographic and 2003 demographic portraits. And a comparison of the demographics of these two earlier surveys with the Spring 2002 cross-sectional portion shows that the 2004 and 2003 surveys contain respondents who are generally somewhat younger. This, of course, was consistent with the introduction of the "youngest" driver sample in the 2004 and 2003 surveys. This trend generally continues in 2005 even though the overall 2005 sample is just slightly older than the 2004 sample.[8]

The 2005 respondents overall appear to have driven somewhat more miles per year than the 2004 respondents when we examine the mean miles driven (about 450 miles more per year). But the median miles driven per year is the same (at 12,000 miles/year). In 2004, we had commented that respondents in the 2004 and 2003 surveys appeared to have driven somewhat fewer miles per year than the 2002 cross-sectional sample. At the time and from the 2004 results, this appeared to be a reflection of the somewhat younger sample. The fact that the 2005 sample is slightly older than the 2004 sample and is found to have driven somewhat more miles per year is consistent with this observation.

[8] The differences in age composition between the 2005 and 2004 samples do not lie in the youngest age groups. Rather, we find the 2005 sample contains slightly fewer in the 46-to-55 age group (-2%) and slightly more in the 56-to-65 age group (+2%).

A SUMMARY OF RESULTS

The following pages summarize the final results. For the Spring 2005 survey, we present the results for the total sample, as we did for the Spring 2004 and Spring 2003 surveys and both surveys in 2001. For summary results reporting trends, we have included three averages for the Spring 2002 survey: that for all respondents; that for cross-sectional sample; and that for the panel sample. However, it is our opinion that the best comparison here is the with the 2002 "cross-sectional" sample (the middle result reported), and it is this figure we use in commenting upon trends below.

Ratings of specific aspects of highways and bridges

We asked respondents to rate nine aspects under the category of Maintaining Highways and Traffic Flow, another nine aspects under the category of Road Repair and Construction, and five aspects under the category of Traveler Services.

Generally speaking, we find a great deal of consistency between the most recent Spring 2005 findings and the Spring 2004 and Spring 2003 findings with regard to the order of aspects within each category. Only small differences are found here. The Spring 2005 mean ratings also generally do not differ much from the Spring 2004 mean ratings for most items. However, generally there is a tendency for the Spring 2005 mean ratings to be slightly less positive than those found in the previous two years. However, this should not be exaggerated, for stability rather than change is the predominant theme here. This is reflected in the fact that we found a great deal of stability in the last two to three years across the average mean ratings for each of the three general categories. Tables for all these results follow after summary text.

Maintaining highways and traffic flow

Using the 2005 findings, the nine aspects can be ordered, into the following general four tiers. Presented below are: the aspect; the percent giving an "excellent" rating; the percent giving an "excellent" *or* "good" rating; and the mean rating. (Table 3A.)

	Excel-lent	Excellent or Good	Mean
Tier One			
Snow and ice removal ……	20%	77%	3.91
Traffic signs ……	19%	77%	3.91
Tier Two			
Electronic message boards to advice of delays or construction areas ……	17%	70%	3.80
Tier Three			
Visibility of lane / shoulder markings ……..	12%	58%	3.59
Landscaping and overall appearance ……	8%	55%	3.54
Cleanliness of roadsides ……..	8%	55%	3.52
Timely removal of debris and dead animals ……..	9%	55%	3.51

Tier Four			
Roadside lighting and reflectors ……..	7%	48%	3.38
Timing of traffic signals …….	7%	48%	3.36

The order of the aspects in 2005 is nearly the same as that in 2004 with two slight exceptions, the reversal of the ranks of the aspects ranked sixth and seventh (whose mean ratings were very similar in2004), and the aspect ranked eighth and ninth (the last two aspects). Actually, one of the greatest changes occurred for the aspect of "visibility of lane / shoulder markings," which dropped from Tier Two to Tier Three.[9]

When comparing 2005 mean ratings to those in 2004, we find: five aspects where we see a decline in the mean ratings (with three of the five being small declines); three aspects with virtually no change; and one aspect where we see a small increase. But, to put this in context, we noted in the Spring 2004 Report that, "with the exception of cleanliness of roadsides, the 2004 mean ratings are among the most positive across all surveys."

The largest declines occurred for two aspects. One is the aspect of "visibility of lane / shoulder markings," which experienced a decline of 0.09 and, as we saw, dropped this aspect from Tier Two to Tier Three. The other is that of "timing of traffic signals," which also experienced a decline of .09 and dropped it to last position, beneath that of "roadside lighting and reflectors," which itself saw a decline of .04. Small declines are also found for the two aspects rated most highly (declines of .05 and .03). The only aspect for which an increase, albeit small, is found is that of "cleanliness of roadsides" (increase of .05). (See Table 3B.)

Road repair and construction

Using the 2005 findings, the nine aspects can be ordered, into the following general four tiers. Presented below are: the aspect; the percent giving an "excellent" rating; the percent giving an "excellent" *or* "good" rating; and the mean rating. (Table 4A.)

	Excel-lent	Excellent or Good	Mean
Tier One			
Warning signs when workers present ……..	18%	76%	3.89
Tier Two			
Workzone signs to direct merging traffic and alert motorists to reduce speed ……	12%	61%	3.62
Tier Three			
Advance information about construction projects ……..	9%	49%	3.36
Signs about alternative routes when construction …….	7%	47%	3.32
Ride quality / smoothness on interstates ……	4%	41%	3.22

[9] We also added Tier Four to this year's analysis, differentiating the bottom two aspects from the aspects in Tier Three.

Tier Four			
Timeliness of repairs on interstates ……	3%	32%	3.08
Ride quality / smoothness on non-interstates ……	2%	31%	3.07
The flow of traffic through workzones …….	4%	34%	3.06
Timeliness of repairs on non-interstates ……	3%	30%	3.03

The order of these aspects in 2005 remains very similar to that found in 2004, with one exception, this being the reversal in rank orders between "the flow of traffic through workzones" (6^{th} to 7^{th}) and "ride quality/smoothness of non-interstates" (7^{th} to 6^{th}).

When comparing 2005 mean ratings to those in 2004, we find: four aspects where we see moderately small declines in the mean ratings; four aspects with no change or very minimal change (stable or within .02); and one aspect where we see a very small increase. (See Table 4B.)

The largest differences, each showing a decline of .06, are found for four aspects: "advance information about construction and road repair projects" (with the 2005 mean rating being the lowest mean rating for this item across all surveys); "ride quality and smoothness of pavement on interstates" (with the 2005 mean rating being the lowest mean rating for this item since the Spring 2001 survey); "timeliness of repairs on interstate highways" (with the 2005 mean rating being the lowest mean rating for this item since the Fall 2001 survey); and "ride quality and smoothness on non-interstate highways" (with the 2005 mean rating being the lowest mean rating on this item since the Spring 2001 survey).

For the other five aspects in this section, we can generally state, consistent with our conclusion in last year's report, that there is a great deal of stability in the mean ratings found over the past four to five surveys.

Traveler services

Using the 2005 findings, the five aspects can be ordered, into the following general three tiers. Presented below are: the aspect; the percent giving an "excellent" rating; the percent giving an "excellent" *or* "good" rating; and the mean rating. Note that the mean rating for the first aspect is actually just above the 'good" rating level. (Table 5A.)

	Excel-lent	Excellent or Good	Mean
Tier One			
Informational signs at highway exits for food, gas, and lodging ……..……..	22%	86%	4.06
Tier Two			
Informational signs about tourist attractions and state parks ……..	16%	75%	3.87
Cleanliness of rest areas …….	17%	69%	3.80
Safety of rest areas ……..	13%	68%	3.74

Tier Three

Availability of free IDOT maps …….	16%	53%	3.42

The order of these aspects is the same as that found in 2004 and 2003. Further, there is generally a substantial amount of stability in the mean ratings across the most recent four or five surveys for all aspects but the last one. For availability of IDOT maps, there was an increase from Spring 2001 to the next three surveys of Fall 2001 to Spring 2003 and then another increase in Spring 2004 (3.24 to about 3.35 to 3.42), with the Spring 2005 mean remaining at the 2004 level. (See Table 5B.)

Average composite ratings for each general area

For each of the three general areas, we calculated an average composite rating. Both the mean and median ratings for each of the three general areas are virtually the same as those found in 2004, which in turn were virtually the same as those found in 2003. Further, for all three areas, we find increases in the composite mean ratings from Spring to Fall of 2001 and then basic stability ever since. For two of the three areas, this is also the case for the median composite ratings. For Travelers Services, the composite median results are stable across all surveys. (See Tables 6A and 6B.)

Table 3A
Ratings on Aspects relating to
Maintaining Highways and Traffic Flow

Aspect rated[a] **Top: Total** **Middle: Cross-section** **Bottom: Panel**	**Excellent (5)**[b]	**Good (4)**	**Fair (3)**	**Poor (2)**	**Very Poor (1)**	***n*** ***(% of sample)***	***mean***
4. Snow and ice removal	20%	58%	19%	3%	1%	*1326 (98%)*	*3.91*
5. Traffic signs (for example, directional signs, warning signs, miles to destination signs)	19%	58%	19%	4%	1%	*1310 (99%)*	*3.91*
6. Electronic message boards to advise drivers of delays or construction areas	17%	54%	23%	5%	2%	*1244 (94%)*	*3.80*
7. Visibility of lane and shoulder markings on highways	12%	45%	33%	8%	2%	*1305 (98%)*	*3.59*
3. Landscaping and overall appearance of roadsides and medians	8%	47%	37%	7%	2%	*1301 (98%)*	*3.54*
1. Cleanliness of roadsides, absence of litter	8%	47%	36%	7%	2%	*1297 (98%)*	*3.52*
2. Timely removal of debris and dead animals from pavement	9%	46%	34%	10%	2%	*1267 (96%)*	*3.51*
9. Roadside lighting and reflectors for visibility after dark and in bad weather	7%	41%	38%	12%	2%	*1273 (96%)*	*3.39*
8. Timing of traffic signals to maintain flow of traffic	7%	41%	36%	12%	4%	*1283 (97%)*	*3.35*

[a]The items are ordered by mean rating, from most positive to least positive. The numbers next to the items indicate the order that they appeared in the questionnaire.
[b]The actual scale in the questionnaire is reversed. However, we have recoded the scale so that the higher score represents a more positive rating.

Table 3B
Ratings on Aspects relating to
Maintaining Highways and Traffic Flow

Aspect rated	Spring 2001 means (n)	Fall 2001 Means (n)	Spring 2002 Means T: Total M: Cross B: Panel	Spring 2003 means (n)	Spring 2004 means (n)	Spring 2005 means (n)
4. Snow and ice removal	3.82 (1363)	3.72 (1222)	3.93 3.89 3.99	3.95 (1400)	3.96 (1302)	3.91 (1326)
5. Traffic signs (for example, directional signs, warning signs, miles to destination signs)	3.86 (1379)	3.89 (1236)	3.92 3.93 3.90	3.90 (1399)	3.94 (1307)	3.91 (1310)
6. Electronic message boards to advise drivers of delays or construction areas	3.70 (1323)	3.81 (1199)	3.79 3.75 3.82	3.70 (1322)	3.79 (1234)	3.80 (1244)
7. Visibility of lane and shoulder markings on highways	3.57 (1372)	3.69 (1229)	3.67 3.67 3.67	3.61 (1399)	3.68 (1308)	3.59 (1305)
3. Landscaping and overall appearance of roadsides and medians	3.43 (1377)	3.52 (1231)	3.53 3.48 3.58	3.53 (1399)	3.52 (1305)	3.54 (1301)
1. Cleanliness of roadsides, absence of litter	3.36 (1384)	3.56 (1242)	3.50 3.45 3.55	3.52 (1407)	3.47 (1314)	3.52 (1297)
2. Timely removal of debris and dead animals from pavement	3.43 (1342)	3.46 (1207)	3.50 3.46 3.54	3.56 (1363)	3.50 (1277)	3.51 (1267)

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Table 3B. (continued)
Ratings on Aspects relating to
Maintaining Highways and Traffic Flow

Aspect rated	Spring 2001 means (n)	Fall 2001 Means (n)	Spring 2002 Means T: Total M: Cross B: Panel	Spring 2003 means (n)	Spring 2004 means (n)	Spring 2005 means (n)
9. Roadside lighting and reflectors for visibility after dark and in bad weather	3.33 (1352)	3.41 (1203)	3.44 3.42 3.46	3.39 (1363)	3.43 (1291)	3.39 (1273)
8. Timing of traffic signals to maintain flow of traffic	3.33 (1347)	3.37 (1212)	3.44 3.41 3.48	3.42 (1387)	3.44 (1291)	3.35 (1283)

Table 4A
Ratings on Aspects relating to
Road Repair and Construction

Aspect rated[a] **Top: Total Middle: Cross-section Bottom: Panel**	**Excellent (5)** [b]	**Good (4)**	**Fair (3)**	**Poor (2)**	**Very Poor (1)**	***n*** ***(% of sample)***	***mean***
7. Warning signs when workers are present	18%	58%	20%	3%	1%	*1299 (98%)*	*3.89*
6. Workzone signs to direct merging traffic and alert motorists to reduce speed	12%	49%	30%	6%	2%	*1300 (98%)*	*3.61*
9. Advance information about construction and repair projects to the public through tv, radio, and newspapers	9%	39%	34%	14%	4%	*1196 (90%)*	*3.36*
8. Signs about alternative routes when there is construction	7%	40%	35%	15%	4%	*1261 (95%)*	*3.32*
3. Ride quality and smoothness of pavement on interstates	4%	36%	41%	14%	5%	*1287 (97%)*	*3.22*
1. Timeliness of repairs on interstate highways	3%	29%	45%	18%	5%	*1238 (93%)*	*3.08*
4. Ride quality and smoothness on non-interstate highways	2%	29%	47%	17%	5%	*1265 (95%)*	*3.07*
5. The flow of traffic through workzones	4%	30%	42%	16%	8%	*1279 (96%)*	*3.06*
2. Timeliness of repairs on non-interstate highways	2%	27%	47%	18%	6%	*1229 (93%)*	*3.03*

[a]The items are ordered by mean rating, from most positive to least positive. The numbers next to the items indicate the order that they appeared in the questionnaire.
[b]The actual scale in the questionnaire is reversed. However, we have recoded the scale so that the higher score represents a more positive rating.

Table 4B
Ratings on Aspects relating to Road Repair and Construction:
Trends Across Surveys

Aspect rated	Spring 2001 means (n)	Fall 2001 means (n)	Spring 2002 Means T: Total M: Cross B: Panel	Spring 2003 means (n)	Spring 2004 means (n)	Spring 2005 means (n)
7. Warning signs when workers are present	3.81 (1374)	3.89 (1233)	3.82 3.79 3.86	3.89 (1402)	3.86 (1302)	3.89 (1299)
6. Work zone signs to direct merging traffic and alert motorists to reduce speed	3.71 (1378)	3.58 (1231)	3.65 3.63 3.67	3.60 (1392)	3.62 (1302)	3.61 (1300)
9. Advance information about construction and repair projects to the public through tv, radio, and newspapers	3.41 (1294)	3.39 (1162)	3.40 3.36 3.45	3.42 (1309)	3.42 (1211)	3.36 (1196)
8. Signs about alternative routes when there is construction	3.25 (1328)	3.32 (1200)	3.24 3.23 3.26	3.29 (1373)	3.34 (1260)	3.32 (1261)
3. Ride quality and smoothness of pavement on interstates	3.08 (1358)	3.26 (1207)	3.28 3.27 3.30	3.29 (1380)	3.28 (1289)	3.22 (1287)
1. Timeliness of repairs on interstate highways	2.97 (1322)	3.07 (1171)	3.16 3.12 3.22	3.17 (1337)	3.14 (1227)	3.08 (1238)
5. The flow of traffic through work zones	2.95 (1372)	2.98 (1221)	3.11 3.05 3.17	3.09 (1378)	3.09 (1299)	3.07 (1265)

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Table 4B. (continued)
Ratings on Aspects relating to Road Repair and Construction:
Trends Across Surveys

Aspect rated	Spring 2001 means (n)	Fall 2001 means (n)	Spring 2002 Means T: Total M: Cross B: Panel	Spring 2003 means (n)	Spring 2004 means (n)	Spring 2005 means (n)
2. Timeliness of repairs on non-interstate highways	2.87 (1305)	3.00 (1132)	3.09 3.04 3.15	3.08 (1318)	3.04 (1216)	3.06 (1279)
4. Ride quality and smoothness on non-interstate highways	2.89 (1342)	3.10 (1188)	3.12 3.10 3.14	3.13 (1369)	3.09 (1272)	3.03 (1229)

Table 5A
Ratings on Aspects relating to
Traveler Services

Aspect rated[a] **Top: Total** **Middle: Cross-section** **Bottom: Panel**	**Excellent (5)** [b]	**Good (4)**	**Fair (3)**	**Poor (2)**	**Very Poor (1)**	***n*** ***(% of sample)***	***mean***
3. Informational signs at highway exits for food, gas, and lodging	22%	64%	13%	2%	0%	*1266 (95%)*	*4.06*
4. Informational highway signs about area tourist attractions and state parks	16%	59%	22%	3%	1%	*1240 (94%)*	*3.87*
1. Cleanliness of rest areas for highway motorists	17%	52%	26%	5%	1%	*1096 (83%)*	*3.80*
2. Safety of rest areas for highway motorists	13%	55%	27%	4%	1%	*1037 (78%)*	*3.74*
5. Availability of free IDOT road maps	16%	37%	27%	15%	6%	*908 (68%)*	*3.42*

[a]The items are ordered by mean rating, from most positive to least positive. The numbers next to the items indicate the order that they appeared in the questionnaire.
[b]The actual scale in the questionnaire is reversed. However, we have recoded the scale so that the higher score represents a more positive rating.

Table 5B
Ratings on Aspects relating to Traveler Services:
Trends Across Surveys

Aspect rated	Spring 2001 means (n)	Fall 2001 means (n)	Spring 2002 Means T: Total M: Cross B: Panel	Spring 2003 means (n)	Spring 2004 means (n)	Spring 2005 means (n)
3. Informational signs at highway exits for food, gas, and lodging	4.02 (1343)	4.07 (1191)	4.08 4.04 4.13	4.05 (1350)	4.07 (1265)	4.06 (1266)
4. Informational highway signs about area tourist attractions and state parks	3.83 (1303)	3.89 (1159)	3.88 3.83 3.93	3.86 (1320)	3.86 (1223)	3.87 (1240)
1. Cleanliness of rest areas for highway motorists	3.71 (1165)	3.77 (1035)	3.87 3.85 3.89	3.79 (1168)	3.78 (1095)	3.80 (1096)
2. Safety of rest areas for highway motorists	3.58 (1100)	3.67 (983)	3.71 3.70 3.72	3.72 (1118)	3.72 (1021)	3.74 (1037)
5. Availability of free IDOT road maps	3.24 (947)	3.34 (847)	3.40 3.35 3.46	3.35 (991)	3.42 (891)	3.42 (908)

Table 6A
Summary Statistics for Composite Section Ratings

For each of the above three sections, a composite rating was derived by calculating the average score across the items in the section. This was done by summing all relevant ratings and dividing by the total number of items rated in the respective section.

	Median	Mean	Std dev	*n*
Spring, 2005				
Maintaining highways and traffic flow	3.67	3.61	0.56	*1315*
Road repair and construction	3.33	3.30	0.64	*1311*
Traveler services	3.80	3.79	0.62	*1278*
Spring, 2004				
Maintaining highways and traffic flow	3.67	3.63	0.53	*1320*
Road repair and construction	3.33	3.33	0.61	*1318*
Traveler services	3.80	3.78	0.65	*1280*
Spring, 2003				
Maintaining highways and traffic flow	3.67	3.62	0.53	*1418*
Road repair and construction	3.33	3.33	0.59	*1416*
Traveler services	3.80	3.77	0.63	*1370*
Spring, 2002 ***Top number: total*** ***Middle number: cross-sectional*** ***Bottom number: panel***				
Maintaining highways and traffic flow	3.67 3.67 3.67	3.63* 3.61 3.67	0.54 0.54 0.53	*1760* *964* *796*
Road repair and construction	3.33 3.33 3.38	3.33* 3.30 3.36	0.60 0.59 0.61	*1753* *959* *795*
Traveler services	4.00 3.80 4.00	3.80* 3.77 3.84	0.60 0.61 0.60	*1680* *900* *780*
Fall, 2001				
Maintaining highways and traffic flow	3.67	3.60	0.53	*1245*
Road repair and construction	3.33	3.29	0.62	*1243*
Traveler services	3.80	3.77	0.63	*1205*
Spring, 2001				
Maintaining highways and traffic flow	3.56	3.54	0.57	*1391*
Road repair and construction	3.22	3.22	0.60	*1389*
Traveler services	3.80	3.71	0.65	*1359*

*indicates the difference between the two Spring 2002 samples is significant at the .01 level.

Table 6B
Differences in Summary Composite Section Ratings
Across Surveys

Rating Area *(in order, differences between Spring 2002 and Fall 2001 represent: total sample, cross-sectional sample, and panel sample)*	***Difference:*** **Fall 2001 – Spring 2001**	***Difference:*** **Spring 2002 – Fall 2001**	***Difference:*** **Spring 2003 – Spring 2002** [a]	***Difference:*** **Spring 2004 – Spring 2003**	***Difference:*** **Spring 2005 – Spring 2004**
For mean ratings:					
Maintaining highways and traffic flow	+.06**	+.03 +.01 +.07	+.01	+.01	-.02
Road repair and construction	+.07**	+.04 +.01 +.07	+.03	+.00	-.03
Traveler services	+.06**	+.03 +.00 +.07	+.00	+.01	+.01
For median ratings:					
Maintaining highways and traffic flow	+.09	+.00 +.00 +.00	+.00	+.00	+.00
Road repair and construction	+.11	+.00 +.00 +.05	+.00	+.00	+.00
Traveler services	+.00	+.20 +.00 +.20	+.00	+.00	+.00

[a] To calculate this difference, the cross-sectional mean (mean in middle position) was used for the Spring 2002 results.

** indicates significant at the .01 level; * indicates .05 level. Differences involving the most recent results have not been tested for significance.

Overall ratings of IDOT and employees

The continuing questions: ratings of IDOT employees and overall IDOT job

Overall job IDOT is doing. In 2005, just over one in twenty (6%) gave IDOT an overall rating of "excellent," and just over half (53%) responded with "good." About one-third (34%) said "fair" while just more than one in twenty (6%) gave a rating of "poor" and hardly any (1%) gave a "very poor" rating. The average (mean) rating is 3.58. (See the bottom of Table 7A.)

Ratings of the "overall job IDOT is doing" show steady positive increases from 2001 through 2003 and then consistency in the two surveys of 2003 and 2004. The 2005 results bring the mean rating back to the general area of the Fall 2001 / Spring 2002 level (in the range of 3.56 to 3.59), down from the highest mean ratings of 3.63 found in the last two surveys but still more than the 3.53 found in the first survey of Spring 2001. (See the bottom of Table 7B.)

Ratings of employees. The rank order of the four Employee Performance aspects departs only slightly from that found across the previous four surveys. Again, the most positive rating goes to "courtesy and respect shown to motorists" (mean of 3.86 in 2005; with 74% giving "excellent" or "good"). The next two items have very similar mean ratings and similar percentages giving "excellent" or "good" ratings: "helpfulness of the information provided" (3.75; 68%) and "overall conduct on the job" (3.73; 67%). In all previous surveys, "overall conduct on the job" was in second position, slightly ahead of "helpfulness of information." Again, the final aspect is "accessibility of employees" (3.55; 57%). (Table 7A for 2005 results.)

The 2005 mean ratings for these aspects show small declines from the mean ratings found in 2004 (declines of .03 to .04). Yet, we should remember that the 2004 mean ratings (which are very similar to the 2003 results) are among the most positive ratings found across the surveys (being surpassed slightly only by the 2003 results for the middle two aspects). For three of the four aspects (all but "courtesy and respect"), this brings the 2005 mean results basically back to the Fall 2001 or Spring 2002 levels, but still more positive than found in the first Spring 2001 survey. For "courtesy and respect," only the 2003 and 2004 results are more positive than the 2005 result. (See Table 7B.)

The new questions: general trust in IDOT and assessment of importance of IDOT for area

General trust. Respondents were asked, "Generally speaking, how often do you think you can trust IDOT to do what is right regarding transportation issues?" In response to this, just over two-thirds (69%) chose either "just about always" (15%) or "most of the time" (54%). About one-quarter (26%) chose "only some of the time" while one in twenty (5%) chose either "hardly ever" (4%) or "never" (1%). (See Table 8.)

Importance of IDOT for area. Respondents were asked to evaluate the importance of IDOT "for your area's economy" and "for your area's overall quality of life." The responses to both questions are very similar – with about one-third saying IDOT is "very important" (32%-33%) and about eight in ten saying it is either "very important" or "important" (78% for economy; 81% for overall quality of life). Less than one in five (18% for economy; 16% for quality of life) said IDOT is "somewhat important" while less than one in twenty said IDOT is either "not very" (3% for each) or "not at all important" (1% or less).

Table 7A
Ratings of IDOT's Employees on Selected Aspects and Overall Rating of IDOT Performance

Aspect rated[a]	**Excellent (5)** [b]	**Good (4)**	**Fair (3)**	**Poor (2)**	**Very Poor (1)**	***n***	***mean***
1. Courtesy and respect shown to motorists	18%	56%	21%	4%	1%	*804 (61%)*	*3.86*
4. Overall conduct of IDOT employees on the job	15%	53%	26%	4%	2%	*740 (56%)*	*3.75*
3. Helpfulness of the information provided by employees	16%	51%	27%	4%	2%	*651 (49%)*	*3.73*
2. Accessibility of employees when you need them	13%	44%	32%	9%	3%	*622 (47%)*	*3.55*
How would you rate THE OVERALL JOB the Illinois Dept of Transportation is doing?	**6%**	**53%**	**34%**	**6%**	**1%**	***1260 (95%)***	***3.58***

[a]The items are ordered by mean rating, from most positive to least positive. The numbers next to the items indicate the order that they appeared in the questionnaire.
[b]The actual scale in the questionnaire is reversed. However, we have recoded the scale so that the higher score represents a more positive rating.

Table 7B
Ratings of IDOT's Employees on Selected Aspects and Overall Rating of IDOT Performance: Trends Across Surveys

Aspect rated	Spring 2001 means (n)	Fall 2001 means (n)	Spring 2002 Means T: Total M: Cross B: Panel	Spring 2003 means (n)	Spring 2004 means (n)	Spring 2005 means (n)
1. Courtesy and respect shown to motorists	3.66 (640)	3.81 (612)	3.86 3.81 3.92	3.89 (887)	3.89 (819)	3.86 (804)
4. Overall conduct of IDOT employees on the job	3.64 (598)	3.79 (554)	3.82 3.76 3.88	3.81 (818)	3.79 (744)	3.75 (740)
3. Helpfulness of the information provided by employees	3.59 (507)	3.70 (456)	3.78 3.73 3.84	3.78 (713)	3.76 (621)	3.73 (651)
2. Accessibility of employees when you need them	3.34 (485)	3.55 (447)	3.52 3.46 3.60	3.58 (687)	3.58 (588)	3.55 (622)
How would you rate THE OVERALL JOB the Illinois Dept of Transportation is doing?	**3.53 (1271)**	**3.56 (1157)**	***3.63*** ***3.59*** ***3.68***	**3.63 (1361)**	**3.63 (1249)**	**3.58 (1260)**

Table 8
How Often Can Trust IDOT to do What is Right
On Transportation Issues?

	Just about always (5)*	Most of the time (4)	Only some of the time (3)	Hardly ever (2)	Never (1)	*n (% of total)*	*mean*
How often trust IDOT?	15%	54%	26%	4%	1%	*1035 (78%)*	*3.77*

*These values have been reversed from those in the questionnaire so that higher scores represent greater satisfaction.

Table 9
Assessed Importance of IDOT for Area

IDOT's importance for …	Very Impor-tant (5)*	Impor-tant (4)	Some-what impor-tant (3)	Not very impor-tant (2)	Not at all impor-tant (1)	*n (% of total)*	*mean*
Area's economy	32%	46%	18%	3%	1%	*1144 (86%)*	*4.06*
Area's overall quality of life	33%	48%	16%	3%	0+%	*1153 (87%)*	*4.10*

*These values have been reversed from those in the questionnaire so that higher scores represent greater satisfaction.

Awareness and use of toll-free telephone number and website

Toll-free telephone number. Just over two-thirds (69%) of the respondents indicated not being aware of IDOT's toll-free number to get information on road conditions. Just under one-quarter (24%) are aware of it but have never called it while the remaining 7 percent said they had called it, 2 percent having done so in the past year. The 2005 results are virtually the same as those found in 2004 and 2003. (See Table 10.)

Website. Just over seven in ten (71%) of the respondents indicated not being aware of IDOT's website that contains information on construction zones and road conditions. Just over one-fifth (21%) are aware of it but have never visited it while the remaining 8 percent said they have visited it. The 2005 results show a six percentage point increase in awareness of the website from the 2004 and 2003 results, which were virtually the same. (See Table 10.)

Table 10
Awareness and Use of IDOT Toll-Free Number and Internet Site

Topic	Spring 2003	Spring 2004	Spring 2005
Aware of toll-free number to get info on road conditions? And have you called this number?			
NOT aware	68%	69%	69%
Aware but never called	24%	23%	24%
Called, but not in last 12 months	5%	5%	5%
Called in last 12 months	3%	2%	2%
Number of respondents	*1353 (95%)*	*1260 (94%)*	*1254 (95%)*
Aware of website to get info on construction zones and road conditions? And ever visited site to get this info?			
NOT aware of website	77%	77%	71%
Aware but never visited	17%	18%	21%
To website but not for this info	2%	1%	2%
Looked at this info on website	4%	4%	6%
Number of respondents	*1344 (94%)*	*1246 (94%)*	*1239 (93%)*

New questions: return on tax dollars

Another new question focused on opinions relating to return on tax dollars. In the preface, respondents were told, "When we invest tax dollars in a state agency, we expect a return in terms of: 1) overall amount of service provided; 2) overall quality of work; and 3) overall professionalism." Respondents were then asked which of these three aspects is "most important" to them, and then which is "second most important." Respondents were then asked to evaluate IDOT on each of these aspects.

Importance of three aspects. Clearly for these respondents as a whole, the aspect of "overall quality of work" is the most important aspect, selected by 65 percent as the most important of the three. The aspect of "overall amount of service provided" is clearly second in importance, selected by 79 percent as either "most" or "second most" important. The aspect of "overall professionalism" is third, with 83 percent not selecting it as either most or second most important . (See Table 11A.)

Rate IDOT on three aspects. Generally, respondents rated IDOT very similarly for each of the three aspects. However, the mean score for "overall professionalism" is slightly more positive than are those for the other two aspects. (See Table 11B.)

For each aspect , less than one in ten gave IDOT an "excellent" rating, but half or nearly half gave IDOT a "good" rating (47% to 50%), with the result that majorities of 52 to 58 percent rated IDOT either "excellent" or "good" on each aspect. Somewhat more than one-third to nearly four in ten (35% to 39%) rated IDOT "fair" and 7 to 10 percent rated IDOT either "poor" (5-8%) or "very poor" (2% each). (See Table 11B.)

Table 11A
Assessed Importance of Three Selected Aspects
For Return on Tax Dollars

Aspect rated[a]	**Most important (2)** *	**Next most important (1)**	**Not rated in top two (0)**	***n* (% of total)**	***mean***
Overall quality of work	65%	28%	7%	*1232 (93%)*	*1.58*
Overall amount of service provided	30%	49%	21%	*1232 (93%)*	*1.09*
Overall professionalism	5%	12%	83%	*1232 (93%)*	*0.22*

*Aspects rated most important were given a value of 2, aspects rated next most important were given a value of 1, and aspects not rated in the top two were given a value of 0.

Table 11B
Evaluations of IDOT
On Aspects of Return of Tax Dollar

Aspect rated[a]	Excellent (5) [b]	Good (4)	Fair (3)	Poor (2)	Very Poor (1)	*n (% of sample)*	*mean*
Overall quality of work	6%	49%	35%	8%	2%	*1122 (85%)*	*3.48*
Overall amount of service provided	5%	47%	39%	7%	2%	*1104 (83%)*	*3.46*
Overall professionalism	8%	50%	35%	5%	2%	*921 (70%)*	*3.57*

New questions: traffic safety topic

Another new question focused on opinions relating to traffic safety. Respondents were first asked,

> IDOT promotes traffic safety by conducting activities such as encouraging people to wear seat belts, discouraging people from drinking and driving, and encouraging the use of child restraint seats. Do you think the amount of activities IDOT conducts to promote traffic safety is: too much; about right; too little; or "don't know"? *(See results in top part of Table 12.)*

Then respondents were asked to rate "the effectiveness of messages IDOT uses to promote traffic safety (for such things as: seat belts; drinking and driving; child restraint seats)." *(See results in bottom part of Table 12.)*

Table 12
Evaluations of IDOT Traffic Safety Activities and Messages

Traffic safety questions[a]	Too little	About right	Too much	*n (% of sample)*			
Amount of activities IDOT conducts to promote traffic safety	14%	81%	5%	*1159 (87%)*			
	Excellent (5) [b]	**Good (4)**	**Fair (3)**	**Poor (2)**	**Very Poor (1)**	***n (% of sample)***	***mean***
Effectiveness of messages IDOT uses to promote traffic safety	12%	54%	27%	5%	1%	*1188 (90%)*	*3.72*

Amount of traffic safety activities. As seen in Table 12, about eight of ten (81%) respondents who gave a substantive response indicated that the amount of IDOT traffic safety activities is "about right" while the remaining respondents split almost three-to-one in favor of IDOT having "too little" as opposed to "too much" activity in this area (14% vs. 5%). [Just over one-tenth (13%) either indicated "don't know" or did not answer the question.]

Effectiveness of traffic safety activities and messages. As seen in the bottom of Table 12, just over one-tenth (12%) rated effectiveness in this area as "excellent" while more than half (54%) gave a rating of "good," for a total of 66 percent giving ratings of either "excellent" or "good." Just over one-quarter (27%) rated this effectiveness as "fair" while about one in twenty gave ratings of either "poor" (5%) or "very poor" (1%).

New questions: opinion influences and information

Assessments of influences on opinions of IDOT. From five selected "things that can sometimes influence our opinions," respondents were asked, "how much would you say it has influenced your opinion of IDOT?" Respondents were also offered an "other" alternative. The results are presented in Table 13.

Table 13
Assessed Influence of Selected Opinion Sources
on Respondent's Opinion of IDOT

Source of Influence Rated*	**A Lot (5)** **	**Quite a bit (4)**	**Some (3)**	**A little (2)**	**Not at all (1)**	***n (% of total)***	***mean***
A. your personal experiences	46%	32%	18%	3%	1%	*1198 (90%)*	*4.18*
B. experiences / opinions of friends / relatives	12%	30%	37%	14%	8%	*1159 (87%)*	*3.24*
C. News stories in the media	8%	29%	40%	17%	6%	*1175 (89%)*	*3.17*
D. Advertisements in the media	4%	18%	41%	23%	14%	*1133 (85%)*	*2.74*
E. Opinions of news commentators, columnists, leaders	5%	18%	38%	25%	15%	*1160 (88%)*	*2.71*
Other***	*17%*	*12%*	*37%*	*14%*	*19%*	*181 (14%)*	*2.92*

* The letters next to the items represent the order in which these appeared in the questionnaire.
**These values have been reversed from those in the questionnaire so that higher scores represent greater assessed influence.
***Note that these actually represent various responses and thus is placed last.

For these respondents as a whole, the item of "their personal experiences / things you have personally seen" is clearly rated as the most important of the five selected opinion influences. In second position is the "experiences/opinions of friends/relatives" followed closely by "news stories in the media." In a more distant fourth position is "advertisements in the media," followed very closely by "opinions of news commentators, columnists, political and community leaders."

Evaluations of ways of communicating with the general public. Respondents were offered ten selected "possible ways that IDOT can inform the Illinois public about transportation-related issues." Respondents were asked to rate "each of these as a way of informing people like yourself." Respondents were also offered an "other" alternative. The results are presented in Table 14, according to the mean evaluation rating of the items.

Table 14
Evaluations of Modes of Communication
With "People Like Respondent"

Communication Mode*	**Excellent (5)** [b]	**Good (4)**	**Fair (3)**	**Poor (2)**	**Very Poor (1)**	***n* (% of sample)**	***mean***
A. TV news stories	27%	49%	19%	3%	2%	*1244 (94%)*	*3.96*
H. Other signs along highways (electronic message signs)	28%	47%	18%	5%	2%	*1180 (89%)*	*3.95*
C. Radio news stories	21%	46%	27%	4%	2%	*1204 (91%)*	*3.78*
E. Newspaper news stories	18%	47%	26%	6%	2%	*1200 (90%)*	*3.72*
G. Billboard advertisements	19%	38%	30%	9%	5%	*1169 (88%)*	*3.56*
B. TV advertisements	18%	40%	29%	9%	5%	*1194 (90%)*	*3.55*
D. Radio advertisements	15%	40%	32%	9%	5%	*1168 (88%)*	*3.50*
F. Newspaper advertisements	13%	36%	34%	12%	5%	*1164 (88%)*	*3.39*
I. IDOT website	13%	35%	32%	13%	7%	*862 (65%)*	*3.34*
J. Email messages from IDOT	9%	26%	25%	21%	19%	*789 (60%)*	*2.86*
Other***	*18%*	*37%*	*31%*	*9%*	*4%*	*105 (8%)*	*3.56*

* The letters next to the items represent the order in which these appeared in the questionnaire.
**These values have been reversed from those in the questionnaire so that higher scores represent greater satisfaction.
***Note that these actually represent various responses and thus is placed last.

From these respondents' ratings, the ten selected communication modes can be divided into five tiers. In the first tier are TV news stories and highway message signs. These are followed in Tier Two by news stories on the radio and in newspapers. These in turn are followed by three advertisement modes (billboard, TV and radio) in Tier Three. Tier Four includes newspaper advertisements as well as the IDOT website.[10] And Tier Five is composed of IDOT email messages.

	Excel-lent	Excellent or Good	Mean
Tier One			
TV news stories …….....	27%	76%	3.96
Other signs along highways ……	28%	75%	3.95
Tier Two			
Radio news stories ……..	21%	67%	3.78
Newspaper news stories ……	18%	65%	3.72
Tier Three			
Billboard advertisements ……	19%	57%	3.56
TV advertisements ……..	18%	58%	3.55
Radio advertisements …….	15%	35%	3.50
Tier Four			
Newspaper advertisements ……	13%	49%	3.39
IDOT website ……	13%	48%	3.34
Tier Five			
Email messages from IDOT …….	9%	35%	2.86

In addition, it should be noted that the percent of sample members offering a rating on the last two items of IDOT website and email messages from IDOT is far less than the percent who offered ratings on the other eight and more highly-rated items.

Would respondents "sign up" to get IDOT email messages? Respondents were later asked if they would "sign up" to receive email messages from IDOT about transportation-related topics and issues." Nearly one of twenty (19%) respondents indicated "yes," about half of them (52%) said "no," and over one in ten (13%) said they "don't know." One in six (16%) specifically indicated they do not have email (16%). *(These percentages are based on the 95 percent of respondents who answered the question.)*

Interest in transportation-related topics. Respondents were presented with eight selected "different types of transportation-related topics." For each item, they were asked to "tell us how interested [they] would be in reading or seeing information on that

[10] Note, however, that the percent of sample members offering a rating for newspaper advertisements is far more than the percent offering a rating for IDOT website (89% vs. 65%). This, of course, has implications for the percent of the public reached by the two communication modes.

topic." An "other" alternative was also presented. The results are presented in Table 15.

Table 15
Reported Interest in Information about Selected Topics

Selected Topics of Possible Interest*	**Very intrstd (5)** **	**Quite a bit (4)**	**Some-what (3)**	**Only a little (2)**	**Not at all (1)**	***n (% of total)***	***mean***
D. Road closures and detours	43%	40%	13%	3%	1%	*1249 (94%)*	*4.22*
B. Current transportation projects in area	37%	40%	17%	4%	2%	*1251 (94%)*	*4.07*
A. Future transportation projects in area	37%	38%	20%	4%	2%	*1253 (94%)*	*4.04*
C. How weather is affecting highway conditions	34%	38%	20%	5%	2%	*1266 (95%)*	*3.98*
E. Transportation funding and tax issues	26%	35%	29%	8%	3%	*1218 (92%)*	*3.73*
F. Public safety topics	23%	34%	29%	11%	4%	*1256 (95%)*	*3.62*
H. Travel/vacation ideas for Illinois locations	19%	29%	28%	16%	8%	*1226 (92%)*	*3.36*
G. Mass / public transportation topics	18%	26%	30%	18%	9%	*1206 (91%)*	*3.26*
Other***	*26%*	*34%*	*23%*	*12%*	*6%*	*150 (11%)*	*3.60*

* The letters next to the items represent the order in which these appeared in the questionnaire.
**These values have been reversed from those in the questionnaire so that higher scores represent greater satisfaction.
***Note that these actually represent various responses and thus is placed last.

According to these respondents' interest ratings, the eight topics can be divided into four tiers. (See the summary below.) The only item in Tier One is "road closures and detours." This is followed in Tier Two by thee other topics relating to roads and road conditions: current and future transportation projects in the area and how weather is affecting highway conditions. Tier Three consists of transportation funding and tax issues and public safety topics. And, Tier Four consists of travel/vacation ideas for Illinois locations and mass / public transportation topics.

	Very Interested	Very or Quite a Bit	Mean
Tier One			
Road closure and detours ……..	43%	83%	4.22
Tier Two			
Current transportation projects in area ……	37%	77%	4.07
Future transportation projects in area ……	37%	75%	4.04
How weather is affecting highway conditions …….	34%	72%	3.98
Tier Three			
Transportation funding and tax issues ……	26%	61%	3.73
Public safety topics ……	23%	57%	3.62
Tier Four			
Travel/vacation ideas for Illinois locations ……	19%	48%	3.36
Mass / public transportation topics ……	18%	44%	3.26